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The Friday Letter

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June 19, 1987

On the Hill



On June 11, Assistant Secretary John W. Bode appeared before the Subcommittee on Nutrition and Investigations of the Senate Agriculture Committee to discuss administrative and funding issues pertaining to the WIC program. Mr. Bode made the following points:

- USDA does not believe that the conversion of rebated food funds to administrative use is subject to USDA's discretion under the existing law.
- USDA opposes indexing the administrative and food grants. WIC administrative funds have continued to grow at the pace of total funding, while other programs have been frozen or reduced during these times of budget restraint.
- USDA is concerned that dramatic increases in WIC funding, as advocated by the National Association of WIC Directors and Bread for the World, would not necessarily go to these most in need.

Other witnesses included representatives from Bread for the World, the National Association of WIC Directors, and the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

--Story by Frank Ippolito
Governmental Affairs Staff

Who's On First

Hey, buddy, can you spare a dime? Maybe. When do you need it—FY '87, FY '88 or FY '89?



If you're confused about the budget process, join the crowd. In the best of years the budget is confusing, and this budget season is no different.

For FY 1988, Congress has again failed to meet its budget resolution deadline of May 15. Neither the House nor the Senate has reported a 1988 appropriation bill. The Agency has to start the detailed planning process for operations in the new fiscal year beginning September 30. We will start the 1988 year with numbers that are 95 percent sure and hope that Congress catches up.

FNS is also working on proposals for Agency operations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1989. Yes, 1989. The Agency must submit these proposals to the Secretary on July 10. There are some good ideas and hard work being put into the process by the deputy administrators, their staffs, and the Office of Analysis and Evaluation. At the risk of sounding parochial, FNS will meet its deadline.

--Story by Jerry Boling
Director, Budget Division

28 Matters That Writers Ought To Be Appraised Of

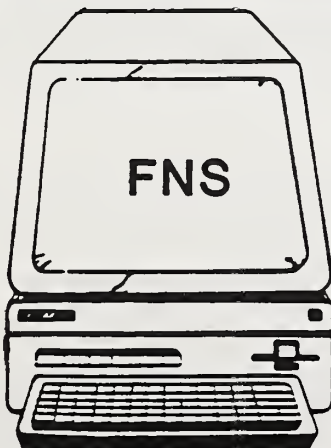
1. Subjects and verb always has to agree.
2. Make each pronoun agree with their antecedent.
3. Just between you and I, case is important too.
4. Being bad grammar, the writer will not use dangling participles.
5. Join clauses good, like a conjunction should.
6. Parallel construction with coordinate conjunctions is not only an aid to clarity but also the mark of a good writer.
7. Don't write run-on sentences they are hard to read, you should punctuate.
8. Don't use no double negatives, not never.
9. Mixed metaphors are a pain in the neck and ought to be thrown out the window.
10. A truly good writer is always especially careful to practically eliminate the too-frequent use of adverbs.
11. In my opinion, I think that an author when he is writing something should not get too accustomed to the habit of making use of too many redundant unnecessary words that he does not actually really need in order to put his message across to the reader of what he has written.
12. About those sentence fragments. Sometimes all right.
13. Try to not ever split infinitives.
14. Its important to use your apostrophe's correctly.
15. Do not use a foreign term when there is an adequate English quid pro quo.
16. If you must use a foreign term, it is de rigor to use it correctly.
17. It usually behooves the writer to avoid archaic expressions.
18. Do not use hyperbole; not one writer in a million can do it effectively.
19. But, don't use commas, which are not necessary.
20. Placing a comma between subject and predicate, is not correct.
21. Parenthetical words however should be enclosed in commas.
22. Use a comma before nonrestrictive clauses which are a common cause of difficulty.
23. About repetition, the repetition of a word is not usually an effective kind of repetition.

T&A Pilots Completed

The pilot testing of two automated Time and Attendance (T&A) reporting systems in FNS formally ended on May 9. The project evaluation team, made up of representatives from the Agency and the Department's Office of Personnel, will now evaluate both systems. The pilot sites may continue using the system until the evaluation team announces its decision June 30. The two systems tested were PC-TARE, developed by the National Finance Center, and TIMETRAX, developed by Information Resources Management Division (IRMD).

The evaluation team will study factors such as the amount of time and money saved by processing T&A's using an automated system rather than manually, the ease of learning each of the automated systems, the ease of using the systems in processing and correcting T&A's, and the various costs involved with implementing each system. Information has been collected from timekeepers in order to get their perceptions on each system, and a cost/benefit study has been prepared by IRMD. The evaluation team will determine whether implementing an automated T&A system is in the best interest of the Agency, and if it is, which system best meets the Agency's needs.

The new system will be distributed nationwide if the Agency accepts the recommendations of the evaluation team on automating the T&A process. This could happen as early as the beginning of the next fiscal year.



After receiving training from Vernon Morgan, director of Personnel Division, MWRO Regional Administrator Monroe Woods sits down to process his T&A using the PC-TARE system from NFC. MWRO has been pilot testing this system for the Agency.

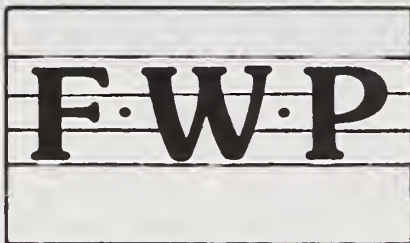


Watching Monroe Woods try his hand using the PC-TARE system are (left to right) Geraldine Goodnow, computer programmer analyst; Martha Cashion, director of Personnel and Management Services; and Toni Jefferson, budget assistant.

-Story by T. Geoffrey Gay
Personnel Division
Photos by Midwest Public Affairs
Staff

MPRO Observes Federal Women's Week

FNS and GAO staffers in the Mountain Plains Region joined in a celebration of Federal Women's Week May 13-21. MPRO Federal Women's Program Manager Sharon Valdez and her committee put together an array of events that began with opening remarks by MPRO's Assistant Regional Administrator Brian Allison on women's roles in the workplace. Selena Dunham, president of a Denver training and consulting firm, discussed career building.



Federal Women's Program

A videotape of the film "Educating Rita" was shown. Officer Jerry Martinez of the Denver Police Crime Prevention Bureau showed a film on averting assault and demonstrated measures for self-protection with members of the audience.

Newly elected Denver City Councilwoman Ramona Martinez addressed her first official gathering the day after city elections, talking about the opportunities she has made for herself in her political and business life. Shirley Ward, GAO's deputy regional manager, summed up the week's two major themes: Change (its inevitability and its challenges) and Choices (including the risks, opportunities, and responsibilities).

The final event was a breakfast served by Valdez and her committee. During the breakfast, a raffle was held for items and services donated by various MPRO staffers—including a horseback ride with MPRO's resident rodeo cowboy, Maurice Wade.



Evelyn Stafford (left), MPRO's new Civil Rights Director, helps serve breakfast to Willie McWashington as Gale Brady looks on.



MPRO FWP Manager Sharon Valdez directed a successful FWP breakfast.

Three Western States Receive CN Awards

WRO Regional Administrator R. Hicks Elmore presented awards for superior management to child nutrition (CN) directors from three western regional states at a recent child nutrition directors meeting in San Francisco.

Receiving the awards were Jean Baecher-Brown, Nevada Department of Education; Rachelle Bagley, Oregon Department of Education; and Charles Brown, Idaho Department of Education.

Nevada's director and most staff were new to the agency. They were recognized for "significant improvement in program operations," including an increase in the state's activities under the NET Program, and developing more effective working relationships with Child Care Food Program sponsors.



Jean Baecher-Brown, director of Child Nutrition Programs for Nevada, accepts an award from Regional Administrator R. Hicks Elmore, for improved management of Child Nutrition Programs in the state.

The Oregon state agency received an award for its work with the state food stamp agency, Adult and Family Services Division, to develop and make available to schools a wage matching method of verification for students applying for meal benefits under the Child Nutrition Programs. Oregon was the first state to develop a system that would allow

school districts to use household income information already verified during the food stamp application process.



Rachelle Bagley, head of the Oregon School Nutrition Programs and Commodity Distribution, receives an award from Regional Administrator R. Hicks Elmore for a wage matching system for school lunch verification.

The Idaho state agency was recognized for developing an accurate estimating process on its 30-day reports and consistently submitting accurate reports to the regional office.



Regional Administrator R. Hicks Elmore presents Charles Brown (left), head of the Food Services Branch of the Idaho Department of Education, an award for good management of Child Nutrition Programs.

-Story by Dee Amaden
Photos by Tino Serrino
WRO Public Affairs Staff

Job Opportunities

FNS is seeking to fill the following vacant positions. To be considered for one of them, submit an up-to-date SF-171, Personal Qualifications Statement, and current performance appraisal to the appropriate personnel office. If you're interested in a Headquarters position, apply to the Employment Branch, Personnel Division, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Alexan-

dria, Virginia 22302. Apply directly to Headquarters office for all GM-14 and 15 positions. For Regional positions, directly to the Regional Office. For details on the requirements for any of the positions listed below, consult the official vacancy announcement. These are posted on designated bulletin boards or you can get copies from the appropriate Regional or Headquarters personnel office.

Friday Letter Vacancy Listing By Vacancy Number

JOB TITLE	AREA OF CONSID.	SERIES	GRADE	CLOSING DATE	VACANCY NUMBER	OFFICE LOCATION
o Clerk/Typist	(L)	GS-322	2/3/4	Open until filled	86-35	FNS
o Secretary Typing	(A)	GS-318	4/5/6	Open Continuous	87-999	Various Locations
o Computer Prog Anlyst (Prom Pot to GS-12)	(A)	GS-334	9/11/12	Open until filled	87-16	IRMD
o Computer Prgrmer/Anal. (Temp NTE 1 Year)	(A)	GS-334	5/7	Open until filled	87-46	IRMD
o Nutritionist	(A)	GS-630	7/9	06/29/87	87-66	NTSD
o Supvry Property Mgmt Spec1st	(G)	GM-301	13	07/21/87	87-71	ASD
o Program Analyst	(FNS-H)	GS-345	12	07/01/87	87-72	PAD
o Program Analyst (Temp NTE 9/30/87)	(L)	GS-345	7	06/25/87	87-74	PAD
o Computer Spec1st	(G)	GS-334	13	07/13/87	87-75	IRMD
o Food Prog Spec1st	(FNS-N)	GM-120	13/14	07/13/87	87-76	ORO
o Personnel Officer	(G)	GS-201	12	07/13/87	87-77	MPRO

FNS - Food and Nutrition Service
 ASD - Administrative Services Division
 IRMD - Information Resources Management Division
 NTSD - Nutrition Technical Services Division
 PAD - Program Accountability Division
 ORO - Office of Regional Operations
 MPRO - Mountain Plains Regional Office (Denver, CO)

Area of Consideration

(FNS H) - FNS Headquarters
 (FNS N) - FNS Nationwide
 (G) - Governmentwide
 (A) - All Sources
 (L) - Local Commuting Area

(28 Matters continued from page 2)

24. Consult the dictionary frequently to avoid misspelling. Correct spelling is essential.
25. In scholarly writing, don't use contractions.
26. Don't abbrev. unless nec.
27. Proofread your writing to see if you any words out.
28. Last but not least, knock off the cliches. Avoid cliches like the plaque.